

BLACK RAIN, HIROSHIMA

It was as if we
were thrown into a
smelting furnace.
My friend had skin
hanging down like
the meltings of a
candle. Many ran
to the cool of any
water they could
find, hurled them
selves into sewers
or headed for the
River Ota which
soon was thick with
the dead and dying.
Some died on the
river bank, their
heads in the water
having used their
last surge of earth
ly energy for a drink.

OTHER APRILS

my father coming
came at lunch to
watch As The World
Turns as Otter Creek
got higher logs
slammed in the
whirlpool blue
wool got tighter
as I ate white
brownies, curled
into dreams on my
lilac bed after
Robin Senecal,
skinny as a
weasel, said he
wouldn't go with
me to the Junior
Women's Club dance
Only fingers in books
seemed warm or real

CICADA

hogwood area
a continuous ring
underground for 17 or
13 years you can't

hear anything else
the male makes

the noise he wants
a woman they shed

their casings coming
out after 17 years

make a strange crunch
walking over what

they've left like
a president kept

underground from his
birth they

sound like water
or machines

PREJUDICE

he wore it like
a badge that
scratched the
clothes of
whatever woman
he held, snagged
lips skin
trees polished
till it glowed
then passed
down like a
family heirloom

— Lyn Lifshin

Niskayuna NY